

Message Text

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR RICHARDSON'S PRESS CONFERENCE ON LOS
AND USG REVIEW OF US INTERESTS IN LOS

REF: STATE 70035

1. THERE FOLLOWS THE TRANSCRIPT OF Q'S AND A'S FOLLOWING
PRESS STATEMENT CABLED REFTEL. FRENCH TRANSLATION OF
WHOLE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE POUCHED AS APPROPRIATE.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

--Q: DO YOU THINK THAT THERE WILL BE A COMPROMISE ALONG
YOUR LINES ON THIS SEABED MINING ISSUE AT ALL?

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--A: I SAY THAT I THINK THE POTENTIAL FOR COMPROMISE IS
THERE. OF COURSE, THAT WAS THE MAIN THRUST OF MY SPEECH
IN CINCINNATI. I SAY THAT AGAIN HERE. THE REVIEW OF OUR
INTERESTS WHICH IS SUMMARIZED HERE COMES DOWN CLEARLY IN
FAVOR OF THE CONCLUSION THAT A TREATY WOULD BE CLEARLY
PREFERABLE FROM THE STANDPOINT OF US INTERESTS TO THE LACK
OF A TREATY -- THAT IS WHERE THE REVIEW COMES OUT. BUT IT
ALSO MAKES CLEAR THAT THE INTERESTS AT STAKE FROM THE STAND-
POINT OF THE US ARE NOT SO OVERWHELMING THAT WE ARE PREPARED

TO PAY THE PRICE OF AN UNACCEPTABLE AND UNWORKABLE SEABED MINING REGIME.

--Q: MR. AMBASSADOR, THE FACT THAT THERE HAS BEEN A DELAY IN THE HOUSE, AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET THE BILL PASSED BEFORE YOU GO, IS THIS GOING TO WEAKEN YOUR POSITION AS YOU DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM WITH THE 77?

--A: NO. THE FACT THAT LEGISLATION IS UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION IS, OF COURSE, KNOWN AT THE CONFERENCE. THOSE MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE WHO ARE FOLLOWING LEGISLATION AND WHO REGARD IT AS HAVING ANY BEARING ON THE QUESTION OF THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE CONFERENCE WILL ALSO BE AWARE THAT THE ISSUES THAT NEED STILL TO BE IRONED OUT ON THE HOUSE SIDE ARE NOT GOING TO PREVENT THE CONGRESS FROM MOVING FORWARD WITH LEGISLATION. IN ANY EVENT, AS I INDICATE, THE PROSPECT OF SENATE ACTION WOULD NOT, IN ANY CASE, BRING ABOUT THE ACTUAL PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION UNTIL AFTER THE SEVENTH SESSION.

--Q: IF THE ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT AGREE TO SOME FORM OF INSURANCE FOR THE FIRMS WHO WANT TO ENTER INTO THIS BUSINESS, WILL THEY ENTER INTO IT IN YOUR OPINION?
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--A: THE ISSUE OF INSURANCE NEEDS TO BE RECOGNIZED TO BE AN ISSUE THAT ONLY CONCERNS THE EFFECT OF A POSSIBLE TREATY ON ONGOING MINING OPERATIONS THAT HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO GO FORWARD BEFORE THAT. THE COMPROMISE REFLECTED IN THE LEGISLATION NOW BEING CONSIDERED IN THE HOUSE IS A COMPROMISE WHICH SUBSTITUTES FOR A GUARANTEE AGAINST LOSS IN THAT SITUATION, AN EXHORTATION TO THE US TO SEEK APPROPRIATE PROVISIONS TO PERMIT SUCH ONGOING OPERATIONS TO CONTINUE BY CONTRACT WITH THE AUTHORITY. THIS CERTAINLY WILL BE A NEGOTIATING OBJECTIVE.

--Q: WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL HERE FOR MILITARY CONFLICT WITH ANY OF THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED?

--A: THERE WOULD PROBABLY BE SOME INTERNATIONAL PROTEST AGAINST THE LEGAL POSITION TAKEN BY THE UNITED STATES. THAT POSITION IS THAT THE CONDUCT OF DEEP SEABED MINING IS A RIGHT UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW APPLICABLE TO THE HIGH SEAS, THAT IT CAN BE CARRIED OUT CONSISTENTLY WITH THE CONCEPT OF A COMMON HERITAGE OF MANKIND IN THE EVENT OF THE FAILURE OF THE CONFERENCE TO ARRIVE AT AN INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM OF EXPLOITATION.

-- TO PUT IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND, IT WOULD BE A DISTORTION OF THE CONCEPT OF THE COMMON HERITAGE FOR IT TO HAVE

THE EFFECT INDEFINITELY OF PREVENTING SEABED MINING FROM

GOING FORWARD. THERE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE SOME PROTEST AGAINST THAT POSITION. WE THINK IT IS A LEGALLY VALID POSITION AND THAT IT WOULD PREVAIL IF CHALLENGED.

-- OUR CONCERN, THOUGH, IS NOT WITH THE PROSPECT OF CONFLICT ARISING OUT OF SEABED MINING; OUR CONCERN RATHER, INsofar AS CONFLICT IS CONCERNED, IS PRIMARILY WITH NAVIGATIONAL INTERESTS. OF COURSE, THIS IS A REASON, AS THE UNCLASSIFIED

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STATEMENT POINTS OUT, WHY IT WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT ON TRANSIT PASSAGE THROUGH STRAITS, FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION AND OVERFLIGHT IN THE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE, SEA LANES THROUGH ARCHIPELAGOS, AND SO ON. ON THE OTHER HAND, IN THE ABSENCE OF COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT, THESE ARE, NEVERTHELESS, RIGHTS THAT WE WOULD INSIST ON MAINTAINING. IT IS IMPORTANT THEREFORE THAT WE LOOK AT THE MEASURES THAT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN THEM SHOULD THE CONFERENCE FAIL.

--Q: THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE WAS, OBVIOUSLY, QUITE CRUCIAL ON THE ICNT. WHAT IS YOUR PERCEPTION OF HIS INTRANSIGENCE NOW?

--A: HIS WHAT?

--Q: HIS ATTITUDE OR HIS LEVEL OF INTRANSIGENCE?

--A: HE IS STILL THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE. BUT OF COURSE THE CONFERENCE HAS PASSED INTO A NEW PHASE AND NOW IT HAS BEFORE IT A COMPOSITE TEXT, CONSOLIDATING THE SEVERAL DRAFTS THAT HAVE BEEN WORKED ON IN THE PAST IN THE COMMITTEE. AT THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETING IN NEW YORK, WORK ON ADDITIONAL COMPROMISES ON SEABEDS WAS CARRIED OUT IN A NEGOTIATING GROUP CONVENED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF FRANK NJENGA OF KENYA. AND I THINK THAT THERE IS GENERAL FEELING THAT THE GREATEST PROSPECT FOR CONTINUED PROGRESS TOWARD COMPROMISE ON SEABED ISSUES WILL DEPEND UPON THE RECONVENING OF THE NJENGA NEGOTIATING GROUP AT GENEVA LATER THIS MONTH.

--Q: THIS SOUNDS LIKE AN ULTIMATUM TO THE 77. WOULD YOU UNCLASSIFIED

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CHALLENGE THAT CHARACTERIZATION?

--A: I WOULD. I THINK ULTIMATUM IS MUCH TOO STRONG A WORD. I THINK IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE CLEAR IN RESTRAINED AND CAREFULLY-WORDED TERMS THE FIRM POSITION OF THE UNITED

STATES, LEST THERE BE A MISUNDERSTANDING AS TO OUR POSTURE OR TO OUR ASSESSMENT OF OUR INTERESTS.

--Q: I WONDER HOW MANY COUNTRIES SHARE THE US VIEWS ON THE SEABED MINING, AND IS THIS A NORTH-SOUTH ISSUE, I MEAN THIRD WORLD AGAINST INDUSTRIAL NATIONS BASICALLY?

--A: IT HAS OFTEN BEEN CHARACTERIZED AS A NORTH-SOUTH, THIRD WORLD VERSUS INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES ISSUE, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE DEPLORED THAT CHARACTERIZATION. WE HAVE TRIED TO MAKE CLEAR OUR OWN PERCEPTION OF THE ISSUE AS ONE THAT INVOLVES THE INTERESTS OF ALL COUNTRIES AS CONSUMERS OF THE ESSENTIAL MINERALS THAT ARE FOUND ON THE SEABED. TO A DEGREE, THEREFORE, IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED AS AN ISSUE THAT TENDS TO DIVIDE COUNTRIES THAT ARE PRIMARILY CONSUMERS OF THESE MINERALS FROM COUNTRIES THAT ARE LAND-BASED PRODUCERS OF THEM. BUT WE THINK THAT THE TENDENCY TO CHARACTERIZE THE ISSUE AS A NORTH-SOUTH ISSUE IS ARTIFICIAL AND OVER-STATED.

--Q: BUT ARE WE SAYING IN EFFECT TO THEM -- AND THIS IS AN OVER-SIMPLIFICATION -- TO SACRIFICE SOME OF YOUR CLAIMED SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE SEABEDS BECAUSE WE HAVE THE UNIQUE CAPABILITY TO EXTRACT THE MINERALS, AND THEREBY IN THE LONG RUN, TO BENEFIT YOU?

--A: NO. WE RECOGNIZE THE CONCEPT OF THE COMMON HERITAGE OF MANKIND AS IT APPLIES TO THE RESOURCES OF THE SEABED. WE SUPPORT THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY THAT WOULD SUPERVISE AND MANAGE THE EXPLOITATION OF THESE RESOURCES. WE RECOGNIZE THE DESIRABILITY OF A UNCLASSIFIED

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REGIME UNDER WHICH AMERICAN CORPORATIONS AND OTHER PRIVATE ENTITIES WOULD NEGOTIATE CONTRACTS WITH THE AUTHORITY, AND THAT THE OPERATING ARM OF THE AUTHORITY ITSELF, THE ENTERPRISE, WOULD ALSO ENGAGE IN SEABED EXPLOITATION. THESE ARE THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE DUAL SYSTEM WHICH IS AT THE HEART OF THE KIND OF COMPROMISE THAT HAS BEEN EVOLVING IN EACH OF THE LAST SEVERAL SESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE. AND THE ISSUES THAT REMAIN TO BE RESOLVED NOW ARE ISSUES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH THE WORKABILITY OF BOTH PARTS OF THIS DUAL SYSTEM. AND THE GREAT MAJORITY OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE ARE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE THAT KIND OF COMPROMISE. THE PROBLEM WITH THE REVISIONS OF THE TEXT INTRODUCED AT THE LAST MOMENT BY PAUL ENGO LAST SUMMER WAS THAT THEY DEVIATED FROM THE ELEMENTS OF COMPROMISE THAT WERE EMERGING UP TO THAT POINT. THEY SIDETRACKED THAT PROCESS, AND WHAT HAS BEEN GOING ON IN THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS SINCE THEN HAS BEEN LARGELY AN EFFORT TO GET THE PROCESS BACK ON THE TRACK.

--Q: HAS ANYTHING COME OUT OF THE INTERSESSIONALS THAT GIVES YOU ANY OPTIMISM?

--A: YES, TWO THINGS.

-- AS I SAID AT THE OUTSET, THE REASON FOR THIS REVIEW WAS, FIRST, TO SEEK REASSURANCE ON WHAT I MIGHT CALL THE DUE PROCESS ISSUE -- THAT WE WOULD GET A FAIR SHAKE WITH RESPECT TO OUR INTERESTS, AND THAT WE AND OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD NOT FIND THOSE INTERESTS SHORT-CIRCUITED BY ANY REPETITION OF THE KIND OF PROCESS THAT OCCURRED LAST SUMMER.

-- SECONDLY, WE HAVE BEEN SEEKING REASSURANCE THAT IT IS UNCLASSIFIED

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REALISTIC TO CONTINUE TO TRY TO NEGOTIATE COMPROMISES ALONG THE LINES THAT I JUST DESCRIBED.

-- NOW ON THE FIRST SCORE, THERE IS A BROAD BASE OF AGREEMENT THAT FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED UNDER THE OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE WITH THE ADVICE OF THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN. TO THE EXTENT NECESSARY, NEGOTIATING GROUPS WOULD BE CONVENED TO DEAL WITH PARTICULAR ISSUES.

-- THE RESULT OF THE NEGOTIATING GROUP DELIBERATIONS WOULD BE FED BACK TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE CHAIRMEN, AND OPPORTUNITY WOULD BE GIVEN TO KEY CONCERNED COUNTRIES TO BE CONSULTED.

-- ANY RESULTING PROPOSED REVISIONS IN THE COMPOSITE TEXT WOULD THEN BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR DEBATE IN PLENARY.

-- THESE WERE THE ELEMENTS OF PROCEDURAL UNDERSTANDING THAT EMERGED FROM THE SEVERAL INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS AND THEY HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGING. THEY WOULD SATISFY OUR CONCERNS ON THAT SCORE. IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE SOME QUESTION AS TO THE EXISTENCE OF THE CONSENSUS UNDERLYING THAT APPROACH EMERGED ON THE LAST DAY OF THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETING THAT IT IS NOW NECESSARY TO GO TO GENEVA EARLY TO MAKE SURE THAT THESE UNDERSTANDINGS WILL PREVAIL.

-- NOW ON THE SUBSTANTIVE SIDE, WE FOUND AS EARLY AS THE SMALL INTERSESSIONAL MEETING CONVENED IN GENEVA IN NOVEMBER BY JENS EVENSEN OF NORWAY THAT THERE EXISTED A VERY BROAD DISPOSITION TO GET DOWN TO REALISTIC NEGOTIATIONS ON A WORKABLE SYSTEM.

-- WE FOUND THIS SAME ATTITUDE EXPRESSED AGAIN AT THE PRELIMINARY MEETING CONVENED BY PRESIDENT AMERASINGHE IN NEW YORK EARLY IN DECEMBER.

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-- AND SO FAR AS THE NJENGA WORKING GROUP SESSIONS WENT, IT PREVAILED AGAIN THERE.
-- AS FAR AS IT WENT, THIS SAME SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE AND THINKING IN REALISTIC TERMS SEEMED TO BE WIDELY MANIFESTED. AND IF THAT CONTINUES TO PREVAIL IN GENEVA, WE COULD GET SOMEWHERE.

--Q: HAS THERE BEEN ANY THOUGHT GIVEN TO PUTTING ASIDE PART OF THE PROFITS -- IF WE CAN'T GET A TREATY, PUTTING ASIDE PART OF THE PROFITS THAT, SAY THE US OR JAPANESE COMPANIES MIGHT MAKE, AND RESERVING THEM FOR -- MAYBE A UN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND -- OR MAYBE A LATER TREATY -- OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO MAKE IT LOOK BETTER?

--A: EXACTLY. WELL, I THINK IT'S NOT ONLY A MATTER OF MAKING IT LOOK BETTER. I THINK IT WOULD BE MORE CONSONANT WITH RECOGNITION OF THE CONCEPT OF THE COMMON HERITAGE. AND INDEED, THIS IS THE ONLY THING THAT HAS HUNG UP THE LEGISLATION IN THE HOUSE.

-- I MIGHT TAKE A MINUTE TO EXPLAIN THAT SITUATION. THERE IS NO DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES OR THE DEEP SEABED MINING INDUSTRY ON THE DESIRABILITY IN PRINCIPLE OF PAYMENTS BY THE MINING COMPANIES INTO SUCH A FUND -- PENDING THE COMING INTO BEING OF AN INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITY.

-- THE PROBLEM IS THAT WE WHO ARE DEALING WITH THE LAW OF THE SEA NEGOTIATIONS THOUGHT IT BETTER TO DEFER SPELLING OUT THE SPECIFIC TERMS OF CONTRIBUTIONS INTO THE FUND UNTIL WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET FURTHER ALONG IN THAT ASPECT OF SEABED MINING NEGOTIATIONS IN THE CONFERENCE.
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-- SO WE DIDN'T PUT IT IN THE BILL.

-- WE HAD AGREED THAT THE GRANTING OF PERMITS FOR SEABED MINING WOULD BE DEFERRED UNTIL LEGISLATION PROVIDING FOR THIS FUND HAD GONE INTO EFFECT.

-- THE DEEP SEABED MINING INDUSTRY OBJECTED TO THIS BECAUSE THEY SAID IT WOULD CREATE UNCERTAINTY FOR THEM. SO WHAT WE ARE NOW TRYING TO DO IS SEE WHETHER WE CAN COME UP WITH PROVISIONAL FUND LANGUAGE. WHILE I THINK WE HAVE BASIC AGREEMENT ON THAT, THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE HAS INSISTED ON EXERCISING ITS JURISDICTION BECAUSE THEY SAY THE CONTRIBUTIONS ARE IN EFFECT AN EQUIVALENT OF AN EXCISE TAX. AND IT'S THE WAYS AND MEANS

COMMITTEE EXERCISE OF JURISDICTION AND THE ADDITIONAL TIME THAT WILL BE REQUIRED THAT HAVE DELAYED THE LEGISLATION.

--Q: COULD YOU EXPLAIN THE DEGREE OF INTENSITY, OR

FIRMNESS OF OTHER MAJOR NATIONS ON THIS IN ADDITION TO THE UNITED STATES? HOW STRONGLY DO THEY FEEL ABOUT IT?

--A: ABOUT LEGISLATION?

--Q: NO, ABOUT THE COLLISION COURSE HERE.

--A: WELL I THINK IT'S AN OVERSTATEMENT TO SAY THAT THIS IS A COLLISION COURSE.

--Q: OR THE DANGER OF THAT.

--A: WHAT IS REALLY AT RISK IS THAT WE JUST CAN'T FIND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS THAT WILL COMMAND A BROAD ENOUGH CONSENSUS.

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-- I THINK THE GREAT MAJORITY OF COUNTRIES -- INCLUDING THE MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP OF 77 -- COULD PROBABLY FAIRLY EASILY WORK OUT THE REMAINING ISSUES. BUT THE PROBLEM IN THIS CONFERENCE IS THAT IT IS A CONFERENCE OF 156 COUNTRIES IN WHICH NOTHING IS DEEMED TO HAVE BEEN AGREED UPON UNLESS IT COMMANDS A "CONSENSUS." WELL, I WON'T PAUSE TO TRY TO DEFINE A CONSENSUS AS DISTINGUISHED FROM UNANIMITY BUT THE DISTINCTION IS NOT ALL THAT GREAT, FOR SOME PURPOSES.

-- AND SO EACH SIDE STARTED OUT FROM WIDELY DIVERGENT POSITIONS BUT THEY HAVE CONVERGED ON THE CONCEPT OF THE PARALLEL, OR DUAL, SYSTEM AND AS I SAY, FOR THE GREAT MAJORITY THE REMAINING ISSUES OF HOW THAT IS TO OPERATE. IT CAN BE DONE, BUT IT IS NECESSARY FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS TO UNDERSTAND THAT FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW THE ISSUE IS NOT ONE WHETHER THERE SHALL BE SEABED MINING, BUT UNDER WHAT AUSPICES.

--Q: IS THE UNITED STATES AT THIS POINT, FAR OUT AHEAD OF THE OTHER MAJOR INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES IN ITS POSITION? OR ARE THEY IN PARALLEL?

--A: THEY ARE PARALLEL.

-- ALL THE COMPANIES ENGAGED IN DEVELOPING THE TECHNOLOGY FOR DEEP SEABED MINING ARE MEMBERS OF CONSORTIA, AND THESE CONSORTIA CONSIST OF COMPANIES FROM -- IN EACH CASE -- SEVERAL COUNTRIES.

-- THE COUNTRIES REPRESENTED AMONG THEM -- AS A GROUP, THERE ARE FOUR PLUS A FRENCH ORGANIZATION. THEY ARE THE COUNTRIES OF: JAPAN, UNITED KINGDOM, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF UNCLASSIFIED

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GERMANY, NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM, AND CANADA.

--Q: WOULD YOU HAVE ANY HESITANCY IN SAYING THAT THIS IS THE LAST SESSION THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO TRY TO REACH AN AGREEMENT ON? OR DO YOU SEE AN EIGHTH SESSION AND A NINTH SESSION DOWN THE ROAD?

--A: PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SAYING IN THE PAST, THAT THE NEXT SESSION IS A MAKE-OR-BREAK SESSION. I THINK IT IS MORE NEARLY TRUE OF THIS UPCOMING SESSION THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN BEFORE.

-- THERE IS WIDESPREAD AND DEVELOPING RELUCTANCE ON THE PART OF A LOT OF COUNTRIES TO HAVE TO INVEST THE TIME AND TALENT OF THEIR ABLEST PEOPLE IN THIS CONFERENCE. THEY ARE GETTING VERY IMPATIENT WITH IT. MOST OF THE SPEECHES HAVE BEEN MADE AND THE DELEGATES DON'T WANT TO HEAR THEM AGAIN.

-- THERE IS A RECOGNITION ALSO THAT SOME OF THESE ISSUES THAT STILL REMAIN TO BE SOLVED ARE SO TOUGH THAT THEY MAY BE CAPABLE OF RESOLUTION ONLY IN THE ATMOSPHERE OF AN ELEVENTH HOUR EFFORT -- OR EVEN AT FIVE MINUTES OF MID-NIGHT -- WHEN THE LAST REMAINING ISSUES COULD FALL INTO PLACE.

-- BUT IF THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN YOU COULD STILL HAVE A SITUATION IN WHICH THERE REMAIN SO RELATIVELY FEW THINGS TO BE DONE THAT IF PEOPLE ADJOURN WITH THE SENSE, "WELL, IF WE HAD HAD ONLY THREE MORE WEEKS, WE COULD HAVE FINISHED," THEN I SUPPOSE THEY WILL WANT TO COME BACK.

-- BUT IF, INSTEAD, THERE IS THE FEELING THAT WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH A MAJOR EFFORT OVER ANOTHER EIGHT WEEKS AND WE ARE STILL DEADLOCKED ON KEY PROBLEMS, THERE WOULD THEN, UNCLASSIFIED

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I THINK, VERY LIKELY BE A DEGREE OF DISCOURAGEMENT THAT WOULD LEAD THE MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE TO SAY THAT PERHAPS THE EFFORT HAD BETTER BE ABANDONED.

--Q: IF YOU DIDN'T REACH AGREEMENT THIS TIME WOULD THE ADMINISTRATION GO FORWARD AND WOULD THE MINING GO FORWARD?

--A: THE MINING IN TERMS OF REAL, COMMERCIAL SCALE OPERATION CAN'T, IN ANY CASE, GO FORWARD FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. YOU CAN GET VARYING ESTIMATES, BUT CERTAINLY NOT BEFORE 1983.

-- THE REASON FOR THE INDUSTRY CONCERN WITH LEGISLATION IS PRIMARILY THAT WITHOUT SOME RELATIVELY CLEAR LEGAL FRAMEWORK IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO JUSTIFY EVEN THE INVESTMENTS NEEDED TO MOVE FROM THEIR PRESENT LEVEL OF EXPERIMENTATION TO LARGER SCALE EXPERIMENTATION AND FROM THERE, TO COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION.

-- SO IT'S A MATTER OF LEAD TIME, ESSENTIALLY.

--Q: I TAKE IT FROM YOUR STATEMENT THAT YOU WANT SOMETHING THAT GOES FURTHER THAN JUST THE WEB OF RECIPROCAL ARRANGEMENTS, OR UNILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS, BUT YOU SAY YOU WANT SOMETHING THAT IS MULTILATERAL FRAMEWORK. BUT WOULD THIS BE OPEN TO STATES WHO ARE CAPABLE OF MINING? OR WOULD IT BE OPEN TO ALL STATES? AND IF IT'S OPEN TO ALL STATES, HOW DO YOU AVOID THE SAME DEADLOCK YOU HAVE NOW?

--A: I WOULD REALLY HAVE TO MAKE ONE POINT CLEAR FIRST.

-- IT'S GOING A BIT TOO FAR TO SAY THAT THIS IS SOMETHING WE WANT. IT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED IN A UNCLASSIFIED

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NUMBER OF QUARTERS AND WE THINK THAT IT DESERVES TO BE THOUGHT THROUGH AS A POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE.

-- IN ANY CASE, IF THAT ALTERNATIVE WERE TO BE ADOPTED, IT WOULD PRESUMABLY BE ADOPTED, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, BY LIKE-MINDED COUNTRIES, AND OPEN TO ANY OTHERS WHO THOUGHT IT WAS A GOOD PROJECT TO JOIN. AND SO IT WOULD BE A WAY, THEREFORE, OF CREATING A MULTILATERAL UMBRELLA.

--Q: SO THE MINING STATES, THE INDUSTRIALIZED STATES WOULD CALL A CONFERENCE TO SET UP THEIR REGIME AND ANYBODY WHO WANTED TO JOIN, COULD -- MORE OR LESS.

--A: YOU ARE EXTRAPOLATING, BUT I WOULD SAY THAT PERCEPTION OF HOW IT WOULD OCCUR IS A SENSIBLE WAY OF VISUALIZING IT.

-- BUT NO, OUR CONSIDERATION OF THIS HAS SCARCELY GONE BEYOND THE RECOGNITION THAT IF WE ARE AT A POINT WHERE IT IS IMPORTANT TO THINK ABOUT ALTERNATIVES -- ALTERNATIVES TO A COMPREHENSIVE TREATY -- THIS IS ONE OF THE ALTERNATIVES THAT OUGHT TO BE CONSIDERED.

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